

**Mayor's column for
The Enterprise
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You've probably noticed the "grass field" at the southerly entrance to downtown Edmonds where Fifth Avenue and SR104 part ways. It is a large median strip owned by the State of Washington. They refuse to mow it, saying it's due to budget cuts. And we don't have the machinery or the manpower to mow it ourselves...due to budget cuts.

As I wound my way through Seattle last week on the way to a meeting, I noticed that they have "tall grass" growing everywhere as well. Must be budget cuts! No wonder my hay fever has been so bad this year!

Budget cuts? Absolutely! When first elected mayor in 2000, I suspected that the voter-approved initiatives and legislative decisions that followed would take 10 years to take full effect. Cities have worked hard to become leaner and more efficient as a result of those actions. We are now eight years into the process and the economy is accelerating the inevitable.

The time will come, sooner than later, when voters will get the chance at the polls again. This time it will be to decide what services they want to keep and which ones will fall by the wayside. Stay tuned.

My thanks goes out to the Greater Edmonds Chamber of Commerce for their great work with the Fourth of July parade and fireworks. This is one of those days, and the events that go with it, that make Edmonds such a wonderful place to live. The Chamber accomplishes this almost entirely with its own money; this year the City Council provided \$2,000 toward the day's events. This task grows more difficult each year, and I'm sure they would be happy to accept any donations you can send their way to help fund next year's Fourth of July program. And of course, your support of all Edmonds businesses would be welcomed as well.

One last thought on the parade: I have had many people ask why I wasn't in the parade this year. The reason is strictly selfish. Now in my ninth year as mayor, with four years on the City Council previous to that, I have never "seen" the parade. While I always try to work my way back to the parade route after riding in it, I never have seen it from beginning to end.

So this year, my family and I sat on the street with the rest of the parade watchers and enjoyed the children's parade and then the main parade.

I must say that it will be hard to go back to riding in it next year because watching was much more fun than being watched! I hope you all had a happy Fourth.